

Career Pathways of Idaho

**Moving to a
Focused
Education**



Exploring Career Pathways

We wrote this booklet to help you explore using career pathways as a meaningful organizational tool for schools and students. Pathways move schools from unfocused tracks of education to broad avenues that help in the organization of curriculum and courses. They also help students and parents make appropriate choices as to the courses and educational opportunities that will lead to success.

This guide begins with a discussion of career pathways and their effect on schools and students. Next is a list of six suggested career pathways that are based on Idaho's Career Information System (CIS) occupational titles. We explore how your high school might use the pathway concept to organize courses and provide a sample of how a student might use that organization and information to select courses. Finally, the CIS occupational titles are organized into the six career pathways.

Organizing educational programs around pathways gives schools the structure to advise and provide meaningful opportunities for all students. Regardless of Career Pathway(s) chosen or elective courses taken, students must meet State Board of Education requirements.

If we can help you in getting started with career pathways, please contact:

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Students and young adults need to learn about themselves, to have a sense of the world of work, and to set tentative well-informed life and work goals. How can principals and parents help them?

~ Gabrielle Wacker



CAREER PATHWAYS

Career pathways provide school personnel, parents, and students with a new way to look at preparing students for education, work, and life. The career pathway notion can help schools move from an unfocused general track of courses to broad avenues that help put a framework around education. The intent is not for students to select a specific occupation for the rest of their lives, but to have them direct their energies into a more focused and relevant education.

Schools use career pathways as a framework that includes organizing courses and teachers, linking education and careers, integration of academics and vocational education, linking career guidance with the curriculum, and linking educational levels. Students use career pathways to choose or design their own career major. Career majors include course work that prepares students to (1) enter directly into the workforce; (2) continue education focused on one- to three-year technical degrees; or (3) pursue baccalaureate degrees. Every student follows an education plan.

Organizing Teachers and Courses

We most often organize schools around disciplines such as humanities, language arts, math, science, and professional-technical education. This departmental organization is important and brings together experts to build a strong subject matter education. Career pathways give schools the opportunity to lay over this organization a cross curricular structure that allows the subject matter experts, the teachers, to work with teacher experts from other disciplines.

As teachers begin working across disciplines, they can begin by looking at the organization of courses. For example, what courses should students take if they want to pursue careers in electronics, humanities, or medicine? Teachers need to look beyond their area of expertise to see how all the courses a student takes fit together into an educational whole.

Career
pathways
make it easier
for teachers to work
across disciplines.



Integrating Academic and Vocational Education

The career pathway structure helps simplify the integration of academic and professional-technical education. It helps teachers to see more easily the relationship among the courses they teach. For example, students interested in Health Services need academic competencies from anatomy and physiology and professional-technical competencies contained in medical terminology and emergency procedures.

Career pathways help teachers as they work within their own department and across disciplines to design courses that meet the needs of students. For example, physics and automotive teachers can use the physics classroom and automotive laboratory to teach the principles associated with constricting the flow of a fluid. Principles taught by the physics teacher can be observed in the automotive laboratory, such as air constricting in a carburetor when the venturi effect pulls gas into the air flow entering the engine.

Many occupations require work experience before one is considered fully prepared. Occupations such as surgeons, electricians, chefs, and teachers all require work experience. For students, work-based learning activities may be (1) exploratory, such as job shadowing, short term work experiences, and community volunteer programs, or (2) concentrated technical training, such as cooperative education, supervised occupational experiences, school-based enterprises, and individualized occupational training programs. When these activities are incorporated into the curriculum, they complement the classroom by providing related real world experiences that reinforce the academic education.

Connecting Guidance with Curriculum

Schools organized around career pathways have built-in links between the student's motivated strengths and the education offered by the school. Career guidance is necessary so students, with help from their parents, can choose a career pathway and develop an educational plan.

Career pathways help college preparatory students make relevant course selections. A student wishing to become an engineer chooses the Industrial and Engineering career pathway. Here, the student would take courses to meet college admission requirements. In addition, this



In a pathway, students do not wander through school picking courses based on what is easy or what their friends are taking.

pathway encourages the engineering student to take courses in computer-assisted design, advanced mathematics, and other technical courses beyond the basic entrance requirements. Another student interested in health administration may decide to take courses found in two pathways, Health Services and Business and Management. All students will master the basic skills required to be successful, regardless which career pathway they choose.

Connecting Educational Levels

Career pathways show the need for and importance of more advanced education and training. They not only identify occupations but also the corresponding education and training needed to prepare for these occupations. As students advance in career pathways, they encounter occupations requiring increased knowledge and skill.

The following pages give examples of six career pathways and how schools might choose to organize courses. Each page has suggested courses for a career pathway and an example of an individual student's educational plan.

Identifying a career pathway can help students select courses, activities, and part-time employment.

